

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8122

INFO AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

C O N F I D E N T I A L HELSINKI 2480

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP, PFOR, FI, US

SUBJ: HIGH LEVEL VISIT TO FINLAND

REF: A) STOCKHOLM 5410, 04 DEC. 1974;

B) HELSINKI 2411 20 NOV. 1974;

C) HELSINKI A-124, 11 JULY, 1974: ANNUAL US
POLICY ASSESSMENT FINLAND (1974) (NOTAL)

1. US POLICY CALLS FOR RECIPROCAL VISITS OF SENIOR US AND FINNISH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WITH A PARTICULAR GOAL OF BUTTRESSING FINLAND'S POLICY OF NEUTRALITY AND INDEPENDENCE AND ALSO HELPING BALANCE THE CONTINUING FLOW OF HIGH-LEVEL VISITS TO FINLAND FROM THE USSR AND OTHER EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. HOWEVER, AS NOTED IN MY RECENT TELEGRAM (REFTEL B) REQUESTING A HIGH-LEVEL US VISIT TO FINLAND IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS, THE ONLY CABINET LEVEL VISIT HERE SINCE 1966 WERE BY SECRETARY ROGERS IN JULY 1973 (FOR CSCE PHASE I) AND HUD SECRETARY ROMNEY IN 1970.

2. I NOTE THAT THE POSSIBILITY OF A VISIT TO SWEDEN BY SECRETARY OF COMMERCE DENT WAS RAISED BY SWEDISH TRADE MINISTER FELDT DURING A COURTESY CALL BY AMBASSADOR STRAUZ-HUPE. I WOULD EARNESTLY RECOMMEND THAT THE
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SECRETARY ALSO COME TO HELSINKI IF HE VISITS THE NORDIC

AREA. HIS VISIT HERE WOULD BE A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE ADVANCEMENT OF POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL OBJECTIVES HERE.

3. I FEEL SURE THAT FINNISH GOVERNMENT AND BUSINESS GROUPS WOULD ENTHUSIASTICALLY WELCOME US EVIDENCE OF INTEREST IN FINLAND AS DEMONSTRATED BY SUCH A HIGH-LEVEL VISIT. GOOD PRESS, VIDEO AND TV COVERAGE WOULD BE EXPECTED, AND I WOULD ANTICIPATE THAT SECRETARY DENT WOULD BE RECEIVED BY PRESIDENT KEKKONEN, PRIME MINISTER SORSA AND FOREIGN MINISTER KARJALAINEN, IN ADDITION TO THE MINISTERS OF TRADE AND OF COMMERCE/INDUSTRY. IN VIEW OF THE WIDESPREAD KNOWLEDGE OF ENGLISH IN FINLAND, AN INVITATION TO ADDRESS THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OR FINNISH FEDERATION OF INDUSTRY COULD BE WORKED OUT. A MINIMUM TWO-DAY PROGRAM IS ENVISAGED, BUT, IF THE XECRETARY'S SCHEDULE PERMITTED, IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE TO INCLUDE A THIRD DAY FOR A TRIP TO ONE OF FINLAND'S OTHER INDUSTRIAL CENTERS SUCH AS TAMPERE OR TURKU WHERE SUCH A VISIT WOULD DEFINITELY BE A MILESTONE EVENT.

4. A VISIT BY SECRETARY DENT WOULD BE SOLID EVIDENCE OF US INTEREST IN THE FINNISH ECONOMY WHERE WE ARE SOMETIMES ACCUSED BY LOCAL BUSINESSMEN OF KEEPING A VERY LOW PROFILE. THE US SHARE OF THE MARKET IN FINLAND HAS RISEN IN THE PAST 18 MONTHS, AND SUCH A VISIT WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE MOMENTUM DEVELOPED.

5. HELSINKI'S NEWLY CONSTRUCTED INTERNATIONAL FAIR CENTER WILL BE INAUGURATED BY THE INTERNATIONAL BOAT SHOW FEB. 7 - 16, 1975. THIS WOULD BE ONE OCCASION FOR A VISIT BY SECRETARY DENT. HOWEVER, FOR MAXIMUM FOCUS ON HIS VISIT, IT WOULD PROBABLY BE PREFERABLE FOR HIM TO COME AFTER THE FAIR IN THE LATTER PART OF FEBRUARY OR MARCH, OR SUCH OTHER TIME AS MIGHT FIT IN WITH TRAVEL TO OTHER COUNTRIES.

6. DEPT'S COMMENTS SOLICITED.
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